

The Games Cupid Plays

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Summary: Actions during a drunken night lead Ross and Rachel to reassess their relationship.

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Untitled Document > <p>The Games Cupid Plays<p>

Written by Tina Nellis

Ross was at dinner with Alison, who worked in the forensics department of the museum. She was going on about something at work, but he wasn't really paying attention because he was trying to remember what he'd done the night before. Thanks to Chandler and Joey, who seemed to suffer less when alcohol came into the picture, he'd gone to a batchelor party for one of Joey's cousins and gotten drunk there. The annoying thing was, he was sure he'd ordered something to be delivered to Alison, but she hadn't said thanks yet. In fact, she hadn't even mentioned it.

> "I mean, we put the thing through forensics like, 3 times, and then we realise that it's a ringpull from a can of coke that's covered in baked on mud!" Alison told him, laughing. Ross laughed along as well, even though he hadn't the slightest idea what the "thing" was.
 "So, anyway," Ross began, remembering what it was he ordered, "did you get the flowers and teddy bear that I sent you?"

> "The what?" Alison asked, puzzled.
 "You know, the teddy, and the flowers..." The look on Alison's face suddenly turned to one of shock. "You don't know."

> "No, I don't," Alison said, with hostility in her voice. She paused for a moment, before saying, "Are you sure you sent them to me?"
 Ross hesitated, trying to think who he could have sent them to. He couldn't think of anyone, but at that moment, he knew he didn't send them to her, so he shook his head.

> Alison got up from her table and began to leave, clearly angry. "You know, if you didn't want to see me anymore, you could have at least told me! I'm not a child, Ross," she practically yelled as she walked outside, with Ross behind her trying to get her to stop.
 "Alison, wait!" Ross pleaded.

> "Y'know, you could have waited until we were over before you started seeing another woman! You owed me that, at least!"
 "But it's not like that! It's not..." Ross called after her, as she walked away. He didn't go after her, as he figured there wasn't much point.

Ross sadly entered Central Perk, where Chandler and Joey were sat in the usual place talking. They stopped when Ross sat on the sofa.

> "Hey man, what's up?" Chandler asked.
 "I sent flowers and a teddy bear to a woman," Ross started. "Trouble is, it wasn't Alison, and I can't remember who it was because I was so drunk last night it was ridiculous. Now she and I are over." Chandler and Joey looked at Ross, shocked. "I mean, what is it with me? I can't keep a woman for more than a few weeks nowadays. It must be the curse of Carol."

> "No, it's not the curse of Carol, maybe you just haven't found the right woman yet," Chandler said.
 "Or maybe I already found her and did something stupid to make her go away. Oh my God. I'm turning into you, Chandler."

> "I had that one coming."
 "So, you have no idea who you sent them to?" Joey asked. Ross shook his head.

> "Maybe you sent them to the right woman," Chandler hinted.
 "And that would be who?" Ross asked.

The woman sat in her apartment, trying to read some work reports. However, her mind kept wandering to the flowers and teddy bear she had received that morning. She couldn't figure out who had sent them, so she had resigned herself to the fact that they were probably delivered to her by mistake. However, she couldn't help but hope that they were from her ex-boyfriend. She had remained unusually close to him, considering the fact that they had had more than their fair share of problems. Just as she was thinking of this man, in he walked, barging into her apartment without knocking. The woman stood up, startled, as the man looked at her lovingly for a few seconds. Then, deciding not to hesitate any longer, walked over and told her that he loved her, he always had loved her and he always would love her, before kissing her passionately.

Rachel found herself watching another one of those soppy romantic movies. It seemed like that was the millionth one she had seen that week. Monica had advised her that she needed to get back in the game, as the "Ross thing was never gonna happen." She found herself wondering if the flowers and teddy she had received was from Ross. After all, it happened to the girl in the movie, why couldn't it happen to her?

> Truthfully, she knew why it couldn't happen to her. Because it had already happened to her, too many times, and she had foolishly thrown it away. She had never known real love before, so when she realised it was real love she felt for Ross, she wanted to run. And if she didn't want to run, she tried to make their relationship like the love she had always known. Her mother and father had been locked in a loveless marriage until very recently, she was never in love with Mr. Potato Head... uh, Barry... She had never even seen real love, let alone experience it. And when she finally realised what true love was, she was convinced it was too late. After all, Ross and Emily were just minutes away from being married. Well, they would have been married right now, if he hadn't made the slip-up that had brought up so many old feelings.
 She started planning a speech that she was going to deliver to Ross when she next saw him as she got herself a glass of water. "Ross, I realise you don't want to get into a relationship right now..."

Before Ross even knew what was going on, he was standing outside the door to Rachel and Monica's apartment. After the bombshell Chandler had dropped on him - that he had become Rachel's secret admirer (and it was a secret even to him) - he had decided that he needed to clear the air with her. Truthfully, it had needed to be done for a long time. He took a deep breath and steeled himself before opening the door.

As Ross entered, Rachel was delivering her speech to the air while doing the dishes. (Yes, doing the dishes. Monica eventually told her to do them in return for half of the rent.) He decided not to interrupt her, and so watched her from the door in amusement. She hadn't even noticed his entrance.

> "And I know that I've done so much to hurt you..." Ross was sure that he was having a minor heart attack as he realised what Rachel was going on about. She still had no idea that he was standing there, listening to her every word.
 "Oh, forget it, it's pointless," Rachel sighed, still not seeing Ross.

> "No, it's not," Ross said, before he could stop himself.
 "You what?!" Rachel said, turning in shock.

> Ross walked over to Rachel. "It's not." Rachel, still in disbelief, had turned pale by this time.
 "Are you okay? You look kinda pale."

> "Uh-huh. How... how much did you hear?" Rachel asked slowly.
 "Enough." Ross took a deep breath, and continued. "Why didn't you tell me before?"

> "Because... because..." Rachel trailed off as she looked up, and into Ross's eyes. "Because I, um..." At that moment, both of them realised what they were feeling, and felt themselves falling into a passionate kiss. <p>

For a moment, both Ross and Rachel forgot that this was the thing that seemed to keep getting them into trouble in the first place - their love for one another. Ross put one of his hands on Rachel's back and pulled her closer to him, and ran the other one through her hair. Eventually, Rachel slowly pulled away, and opened her eyes. The two of them just stood there for a minute, looking into each other's eyes. Finally, Rachel broke the silence. "That shouldn't have happened. At least not so soon after..." She trailed off as she felt those puppy dog eyes on her again, and she realised that she had no argument. Ross moved to kiss her again, but Rachel backed away again.

> "Ross, look, maybe we should... give each other some space, figure out what we want," Rachel told him. Ross was clearly heartbroken by these words, but Rachel was even more heartbroken, having to be the one to say them. With all the strength he could muster, Ross replied with, "Okay, but before I leave, I just need to say one thing."
 "Fine, what?" Instead of saying anything, Ross, caught up in the moment, took Rachel's face in his hands and kissed her again, before she could stop him. However, it was at this exact moment that Monica entered. They quickly moved away from one another so as not to give Monica any reason to be suspicious.

> "Hi guys," Monica started. "Ross, someone you know is in town, and they want to talk to you."
 "Who?" Ross asked, thinking that it was an old college friend who he had been expecting a visit from for a few weeks. The name Monica said was indeed that of an old friend, just not the one Ross was expecting.

> "Emily." <p>

Emily sat in Central Perk, nervously talking to Chandler and Joey.

> "He's going to hate me. He's going to hate me even more than he already does," Emily said. She had come to tell Ross something. An important something. She had only found out about it a couple of days

 before, through a friend of the family.

> "Hey, come on, Ross doesn't hate you," Chandler told her, comforting her.
 "Yeah, he was just confused," Joey said in addition.

> Ross entered from behind, and steeled himself. He hadn't talked to Emily since the slip-up that had changed everything for them - they had both decided it would be better if they just made a clean break. He also didn't know how he was going to handle it if Emily wanted to get back together with him.
 "Hi, Emily," Ross said, still standing.

> Emily looked up and gave Ross a half-smile. "Hi."
 "Well, we, uh... have something to do," Chandler told Ross and Emily, seeing that they needed to be alone.

> "So," Ross said, feeling awkward.
 "So."

> "Um... why are you here?"
 "Because I need to tell you something."

> "Oh?" <p>

Rachel was in her room, trying to sleep. However, she couldn't, because her mind was all aflurry with the events of earlier in the evening. She was also sure that Emily had come to reclaim Ross, and she

> didn't know if she could handle it if she lost him again. <p>

Ross couldn't sleep either. He couldn't get the events of that evening out of his head either. But he had an added worry - what Emily said. He couldn't believe what she had flown all the way to New York to tell him.

The next morning, Rachel was absent-mindedly picking her slices of toast to pieces. She still couldn't stop thinking about that kiss that Ross had given her - she was sure it meant something, but what?

> In the middle of her thoughts, the door suddenly burst open, and Ross rushed in.
 "Rach, I need to talk to you."

> "I need to talk to you too."
 "Alright, I'll go first."

> "Alright then." For all the breeziness in her voice, Rachel couldn't possibly have been prepared for what Ross was about to say.
 "Rachel, I know why you came to London."

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> Rachel heard the words, but they didn't make any sense. Ross knew? About London? About the reason for her breakup with Joshua? About everything? How? She froze as it sunk in that Ross knew, and dropped the piece of toast that she was holding. Fortunately, it landed on the plate.

> "Rach? Rachel?" A worried Ross moved over to Rachel and gently shook her to get her out of her trance.
 "Oh! Um... hi Ross," Rachel said, the words barely managing to come out.

> "Is it true?"
 "Um... hi?"

> "Rachel, don't avoid the subject!"
 "I'm trying not to! It's very hard with something like this, y'know?"

> "So it's true?"
 "Do you want it to be true?"

> "You still don't get it, do you?"
 "Get what?"

> "Why I said your name in those damn wedding vows!"
 "Well, I

figured that it was just because I had shown up, I didn't think it meant anything."

> "Oh, yeah, apart from the minor detail that it meant that I was still in love with you, oh, yeah, it meant nothing!"
 "You... were?"

> "Am," Ross announced. Rachel hadn't moved from her seat this whole time, but she finally got up and got a glass of water, trying to keep her composure. However, her shock was evident, because her hand was shaking like a leaf.
 "I think you should leave now," she told him. She couldn't cope with this - it was too huge.

> "That sounds familiar."
 "Please, I really think you should leave now."

> "Alright," Ross said, heading for the door. "I'll, um... I'll give you a call." Rachel, who by this point could feel tears forming in her eyes, just motioned for him to leave, before she lost it totally. <p>

Later on, Rachel was asleep on the sofa. She woke up, and heard the radio playing in the background. She slowly got up, walked over to the kitchen, and got herself a glass of water. She noticed how she seemed to be drinking a lot of water lately - Chandler would quip that it was something in the water supply. All of a sudden, she had a flashback to last Christmas.

"Come on, Rach, cheer up!"

> The request from Ross seemed impossible to Rachel. The holidays were hard enough without that special someone to share it with, but when that special someone was your best friend, who didn't have a clue how you felt, it was even worse. In any case, the gang was messing around, all kissing each other under the mistletoe.
 "Joey, move your hands, NOW!!!" Rachel heard a very mad Phoebe yell.

> "Rach, it's your turn," Monica called.
 "Yep, get ready for the Rachel round of the tongue-shoving fun," Chandler added.

> "Ha, ha, very funny," Rachel told them.
 "Come on, Rach, it's just a bit of fun!" Joey said.

> "Yeah, we're all friends, there's mistletoe hanging, and besides, at least 4 of us are drunk! That's what happens!"
 "Shut up, Chandler!" was the reply that came.

> "Alright, Rach, look up." What Rachel didn't know was that mistletoe was hanging right above her, and before she could stop him, Joey gave her a quick peck on the lips.
 "Ugh!"

> "That's one more person who can legitimately claim to have kissed Joey Tribbiani!"
 "That's one more person who wishes she couldn't legitimately claim to have kissed Joey Tribbiani!"

> "She beat me to it. I'm losing it," Chandler said. "Okay, it's my turn."
 Getting up, Rachel protested, "What am I? A merry-go-round?"

> "She beat me to it again." Chandler walked around and gave Rachel a quick peck on the lips, much like Joey just had.
 Ross, who was watching, couldn't help but feel jealous of them. The reasons for the marriage that never was was all he had been thinking about for the past 3 months. But why? He knew he still had some feelings for Rachel, that was obvious, but was he prepared to let himself be vulnerable with her again, the way he used to be? He couldn't help but wish that Rachel felt the same way that he did, even though he wasn't sure of what the consequences would be if that was the case.

> "Ross? Ross? Phone home, ET!" Chandler was standing in front of

Ross, holding his nose to make a funny sound when he spoke and waving his hand in front of Ross's face. Ross snapped to attention and noticed that everyone was looking at him.
 "Ross, are you okay? You look kinda ill," said a worried Rachel. Why did he look so spaced out?

> "Um... I'm not actually feeling so good. I think I'll go see if Carol and Susan want me to look after Ben, so that they can... whatever it is that they do." Ross really didn't feel so good all of a sudden, so he wasn't lying. He quickly took his jacket, and left.
<p>

As Rachel was sitting, listening to the radio and getting caught up in her thoughts, the phone rang. She reached over to pick it up.

"Ross?"

> "Uh, no, is Jade there?" a man on the other end of the phone asked.

 "I'm sorry, you must have a wrong number," a disappointed Rachel told him.

> "Wow, you sound disappointed. Waiting for a call?"
 "Um, that's none of your business, but yeah, I am."

> "A guy?"
 "No, an alien."

> "Wow, no need to be so sarcastic."
 "Sorry. The guy who lives across the hall from me is like that, I guess a bit of it rubs off on you after a while."

> "Well, you sound like a nice enough girl, so how come you're home on a Saturday night?"
 "Because the guy I love is also the guy who I've messed around so much it's ridiculous. Ugh, listen to me, I'm divulging my life story to a complete stranger."

> "That's okay. I mean, I'm only trying to get through to my ex-girlfriend, who I'm still in love with."
 "What made you realise it?"

> "We were both seeing other people - well, I was engaged to mine. God, it was ridiculous, we'd only even known that the other existed for a few weeks, how can you base a marriage on that? Anyway, soon after my ex-fiancée and I announced our engagement, she broke up with her boyfriend. Something about him scaring easily or something." Rachel was listening intently, realising that it all sounded familiar.
 "Anyway, she decided not to come to my wedding at first. I don't know why, but still, she came in the end. But when it got to the wedding vows, I screwed up and said her name instead of my fiancée's. That was 2 days ago."

> "Take my advice. Tell her. You'll save yourself a whole lot of pain."
 "What about you? What happened to keep you away from the one you're meant to be with?"

> "A lot of stuff. Too much to go into on the phone."
 "The games Cupid plays, eh?" the guy on the other end of the line said.

> "I'm sorry?" Rachel tried to keep herself from laughing, even though she knew it was no laughing matter.
 "Well, he decides that you're meant to be with one person on the entire planet, then he makes all this stuff happen to keep you away from them. He's just playing a big game, isn't he?"

> "Yeah, I guess he is. You sound just like my guy... except he probably got fed up with waiting, and took off with his ex-fiancée."
 "Take my advice. Don't let this guy, whoever he is, get away again."

> "Stop Cupid playing at least one of his dumb games, huh?" Rachel said jokingly.
 "Something like that. It was nice talking to you."

> "It was nice talking to you. Bye."
 "Bye." Rachel hung up the

phone. She knew what she had to do. She'd convince Ross. She picked up the phone, and began to dial.

Ross was in his apartment, looking out of the window. After a while, he decided to try and ring Rachel again. He'd decided that he'd given her enough time for her to try and make some sense of the whole thing. Hopefully, she wouldn't be engaged this time. She'd been engaged non-stop for an hour - she must have been talking to her mother or something.

"For God's sake, Ross, where would you be at this time of night? It's 1 am! You couldn't be with Emily, she went back to England before you came over this morning! Didn't she?" Rachel couldn't work out why no-one was answering. Ross wasn't the kind of person to go out and not tell anyone where he was going to.

"Oh, that is IT! I'm going over there," Ross decided, after yet another engaged tone. As he collected his keys and coat, he thought, "Why didn't that occur to me before?"

Rachel had given up on trying to call Ross for the night, and was beginning to fall asleep again, when she heard someone come in the door. It wasn't Monica, because she was staying over at her latest boyfriend's. (How much longer she and Chandler intended keeping up the charade about the London fiasco, which everyone - especially Ross - knew about, was beyond her.) So if it wasn't Monica, who was it? She picked up the small alarm that her mother insisted on her keeping all the time, and slowly pulled out the pin. The room was filled with a deafening sound.

> "Rach! Why'd you do that?!" yelled Ross, with his ears covered and trying to make himself heard over the noise. Rachel, seeing who it was, put the pin back in, and the noise stopped.
 "You scared the hell out of me! I thought you were some burglar!"

> "Me?! Where the hell did you get that idea from?"
 "Well, who else would come into the apartment at this time of night?!"

> "Anyway, it doesn't matter. I came to tell you that..."
 "I love you."

> "You do?" Ross was trying his best to hide the smile on his face, although he was failing miserably (well, not miserably, but you get the point).
 "Yeah. And why are you laughing? It's not funny!"

> "I'm trying not to let you see the massive smile that's going to appear on my face any time now!" Ross crouched down and rested his head on the back of the sofa. He and Rachel looked into each other's eyes for a moment, and they leaned to kiss each other. Unfortunately, Rachel had to pick that exact moment to sneeze.
 "Well, if that doesn't ruin the moment, then what does?" asked Rachel.

> "Do I look as if I care about catching a cold?" Ross told her, and kissed her again. He wasn't lying either. All he cared about was that he was back with Rachel, and he was going to make sure that it was for good this time. <p>

Fin

End
file.